

A NEW SPECIES OF *SENECIO* (ASTERACEAE) FROM NORTHERN
COAHUILA, MEXICO

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ABSTRACT

A new species, *Senecio riskindii* B.L. Turner & T. Barkley, is described from northern Coahuila, México. It belongs to the *Triangularis* group of *Senecio* where it appears to relate to *S. lithophilus* Greenman.

KEY WORDS: Asteraceae, *Senecio*, México

Routine identification of Mexican Asteraceae has revealed the following novelty.

Senecio riskindii B. Turner & T. Barkley, *sp. nov.* TYPE: MEXICO. Coahuila: Mpio. de Villa Acuña, Serranias del Burro, Rancho El Bonito (ca. 29° 01' N, 102° 07' W), Canyon El Toro, calcareous soils in a shaded slope with *Quercus* spp., 18 Sep 1977, *David H. Riskind 2123* (HOLOTYPE: TEX!; Isotype: MEXU).

Senecioni lithophilo Greenman similis sed plantis elatioribus (1.0-1.3 cm altis vs. 0.4-0.6 cm) et involucris majoribus (9-10 mm elatis vs. ca. 7 mm) differt.

Stiffly erect suffruticose simple stemmed annuals to ca. 1.3 m high. Stems persistently white tomentose, about equally leafy throughout. Leaves broadly lanceolate, sessile, clasping, those at midstem mostly 8-12 cm long, 2-4 cm wide, weakly pinnately nervate, persistently arachnoid tomentose beneath, glabrescent above, the margins serrate. Heads ca. 20, arranged in a terminal lax, flat topped bracteate cyme, the ultimate peduncles mostly 2-4 cm long. Involucres campanulate, the bracts ca. 23, uniseriate, mostly 9-10 mm long, glabrous at maturity except for the tufted apices, the calyculus of 3-8 well defined linear, tomentose, bracts mostly 2-4 mm long. Ray florets ca. 13, pistillate, fertile, the ligules yellow, mostly 9-10 mm long, 2-3 mm wide, 4

nervate. Disk florets numerous, the corollas yellow, 7-8 mm long, glabrous, the tube 3-4 mm long, the lobes ca. 0.8 mm long. Anthers yellow. Style branches truncate, penicillate at the very apex. Achenes columnar, ca. 8 ribbed, pubescent throughout with papillose hairs, the pappus of numerous readily deciduous sparsely ciliate bristles 6-7 mm long.

This species presumably belongs to the *Triangulares* group of *Senecio* (sensu Barkley 1978). In Barkley's treatment of the *Triangularis* group for México (in prep.), *S. riskindii* will key to or near *S. lithophilus* Greenman, a poorly known species of southern Nuevo León. The latter is reportedly a cliff dwelling herb 40-60 cm high having smaller heads.

I forwarded type material of the present novelty to Dr. Barkley and he made the following notes after careful comparison with type material of *Senecio lithophilus*:

Senecio riskindii - principal involucre bracts 9-10 mm long; plant 10+ dm tall; stems arising singly from a taproot; stem more-or-less equally leafy throughout but the leaves on the lower third (or half) of the stem withering by flowering time; principal leaves "thinnish" in texture and with the evident secondary veins not notably parallel-arcuate.

Senecio lithophilus - principal involucre bracts mostly ca. 7 mm long; plant to 6 dm tall; stems more than 1 (2 on the type), arising from an apparently foreshortened caudex, the plant probably perennial; stem leafy throughout but the leaves on the lower half of the stem the largest, and persistent at flowering time; principal leaves apparently firm in texture, with at least some of the evident secondary veins parallel-arcuate.

By-and-large, the matter of persistent vs. early withering leaves on the lower half of the stem has some taxonomic distinction. Taproot vs. short caudex is useful but "negotiable," for many senecios with a caudex start life with a taproot, and then develop a caudex as the plant ages.

If the 2 specimens in-hand of *Senecio riskindii* and *S. lithophilus* were collected on the same hillside, I could imagine them as extremes of the same species; *S. riskindii* being a first year plant on a semishaded, well watered site, while *S. lithophilus* is a tough old survivor in a more open, drier place. With the limited materials, different habitats, and distant collection sites, however, I think that they are best regarded as quite separate species.

I am grateful to him for these reassuring observations and hence join his name with mine in proposing the species.

The species is named for its only known collector, David H. Riskind, biologist with the Texas Parks and Wildlife, Austin, Texas.

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LITERATURE CITED

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